



General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

89th plenary meeting

Saturday, 23 December 2000, 12.20 p.m.

New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Holkeri (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 12.20 p.m.

Agenda item 107 (continued)

Advancement of women

Report of the Third Committee (A/55/595)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/708)

The President: The Assembly will take action on draft resolution VI, recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 35 of its report. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolution VI is contained in document A/55/708.

May I remind members that by paragraph 7 of decision 34/401 the General Assembly agreed that, when the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, delegations should, as far as possible, explain their votes only once, that is either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless a delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee.

May I also remind delegations that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on draft resolution VI, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner

as was done in the Third Committee, unless notified otherwise in advance.

Draft resolution VI, entitled "The critical situation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women", was adopted by the Third Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly likewise wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution VI was adopted (resolution 55/219).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 107?

It was so decided.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Third Committee.

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The President: The General Assembly will consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 17 (f), 115, 116, 116 and 120, 116 and 123, 117, 118, 121, 122, 124, 125, 127, 128, 133, 134, 153 (a), 169 and 176.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Eduardo Manuel da Fonseca Fernandes Ramos of Portugal, to introduce the reports of the Fifth Committee in one intervention.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.



Mr. Ramos (Portugal), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: I have the honour today to present to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee prepared during the main part of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Regarding agenda item 17 (f), entitled "Appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/699. In paragraph 5 of that report, the Committee recommends to the Assembly the appointment of eight persons as members or alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2001.

In connection with agenda items 107 — consideration of which the Assembly has just concluded — and 117, entitled "Advancement of women" and "Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001" respectively, the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/708, which concerns the programme budget implications of draft resolution VI recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 35 of its report contained in document A/55/595 and adopted by the Assembly as resolution 55/219. Paragraph 3 of the report of the Fifth Committee sets out the decisions taken by the Committee by its draft decision A/C.5/55/L.27, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 115, entitled "Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/689. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Regarding agenda items 116 and 120, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations" and "Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency" respectively, as they relate to the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on its activities during the fifty-fourth session, the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/706. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the

adoption of a draft decision, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

With regard to agenda items 116 and 123, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations" and "Human resources management" respectively, as they relate to the proposed regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of officials other than Secretariat officials and experts on mission, and regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of the Secretary-General, the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/690. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 121, entitled "Pattern of conferences", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/702. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 124, entitled "United Nations common system", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/709. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 125, entitled "United Nations pension system", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/703. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 127, entitled "Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/691. In paragraph 7 of its report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

In connection with agenda item 128, entitled "Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide

and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/692. In paragraph 7 of its report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Regarding agenda item 133, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/663. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 134, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/664. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning the question of a review of the rates of reimbursement to the Governments of troop-contributing States, under agenda item 153 (a), entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in documents A/55/534 and A/55/534/Add.1. In paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/55/534, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote. Under the same agenda item, the Committee also considered reform of the procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment. In that connection, the Chairman of the Committee proposed a draft decision, which the Committee adopted without a vote and which in paragraph 4 of its report contained in document A/55/534/Add.1 it recommends for adoption by the General Assembly.

Regarding the question of the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit, under agenda item 116, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and

financial functioning of the United Nations", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/532. In its report, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, that was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Under the same agenda item, in its report contained in document A/55/532/Add.1 the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft resolution I, which concerns the question of results-based budgeting; draft resolution II, regarding outsourcing practices; and draft resolution III, which deals with the proposed programme budget outline for the 2002-2003 biennium; as well as draft decision I; draft decision II, which deals with the programme of work of the Fifth Committee for the biennium 2001-2002; and draft decision III, which deals with action taken on certain items. The Committee adopted these three draft resolutions and three draft decisions without a vote.

I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to a change to be made to draft decision III. Agenda item 169, which is found just before the end of the draft decision, should be deleted.

Concerning agenda item 118, entitled "Programme planning", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/710. In that report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution that the Committee adopted without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 122, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/521/Add.1. In that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution that the Committee adopted without a vote.

In relation to agenda item 169, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/712. In that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft resolution I, which the Committee adopted without a vote, and draft resolution II, on voluntary movements in connection with the apportionment of expenses of the United Nations peacekeeping operations.

With regard to agenda item 176, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/711. In its report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution that the Committee adopted without a vote.

Finally, with regard to agenda item 117, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/713. In that connection, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft resolutions and two draft decisions. Draft resolution I deals with questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. Draft resolution II deals with the revised budget appropriations for the biennium 2000-2001, the revised income estimates for the biennium 2000-2001 and the financing of the appropriations for the year 2001. Draft decision I deals with the revised estimates of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its 2000 substantive session, and draft decision II deals with the critical situation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. The Fifth Committee recommended the two draft resolutions and the two draft decisions to the General Assembly for adoption without a vote.

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

"When the same draft resolution is considered in the Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that

delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee, unless notified otherwise.

Agenda item 115

Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/689)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/220).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 115.

Agenda items 116 and 120

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/706)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision, entitled "Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency", without a

vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda items 116 and 120.

Agenda item 116 (continued) and agenda item 123

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Human resources management

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/690)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Proposed regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of officials other than Secretariat officials and experts on mission and regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of the Secretary-General", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/221).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda items 116 and 123.

Agenda item 121

Pattern of conferences

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/702)

The President: The Assembly will now proceed to take action on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

I call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who wishes to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution.

Mr. Nakkari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to explain its position on the draft resolution submitted under agenda item 121, entitled "Pattern of conferences". However, we

would first like to extend our thanks to the representative of Botswana, the Vice-Chairman who acted as coordinator of the consultations that led to consensus on this item.

My comments focus on two points. The first point deals with paragraph 4 of part II of the draft resolution and concerns the use of conference resources and facilities. That paragraph indicates that we must include all the resources needed in the budget for the biennium 2002-2003 in order to provide interpretation for regional meetings. It is our hope that this commitment will be fully understood and fulfilled. As for the phrase "in accordance with established practice", we hope that such a specification will not reduce the resources available for regional meetings.

My second point relates to paragraph 15 of part III. In that paragraph, the General Assembly welcomes the efforts of the Secretary-General regarding the backlog in the publication of the *Repertoire* of the Security Council and asks him to publish current and future issues of the *Repertoire* in all six official languages. Our understanding of this paragraph is that from now on all documents will be published simultaneously in all six languages and that documents should not be published in one language and not the others. We hope that this reference document will be issued in the six official languages of the United Nations.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/222).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 121.

Agenda item 124

United Nations common system

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/709)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "United Nations common system: report of the International Civil Service Commission", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/223).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 124.

Agenda item 125

United Nations pension system

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/703)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/224).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 125?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 17 (continued)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(f) Appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/699)

The President: The Fifth Committee recommends in paragraph 5 of its report that the General Assembly appoint the following persons as members or alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2001: Mr. Kenshiro Akimoto (Japan), Ms. Valeria María González Posse (Argentina), Mr. M. Riaz Hamidullah (Bangladesh), Mr. Gerhard Kuntzle (Germany), Mr. Lovemore Mazemo (Zimbabwe), Ms. Susan M. McLurg (United States of America), Mr. Philip Richard Okanda Owade (Kenya) and Mr. Victor V. Vislykh (Russian Federation).

May I take it that the General Assembly appoints these persons?

It was so decided.

The President: I wish to inform members that, pursuant to resolution 55/224, just adopted by the Assembly under agenda item 125, the persons just appointed to the United Nations Staff Pension Committee will serve a four-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2001.

Agenda item 127

Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/691)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/225).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 127.

Agenda item 128

Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/692)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly likewise wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/226).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 128.

Agenda item 133

Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/663)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/227).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 133.

Agenda item 134

Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/664)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/228).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 134.

Agenda item 153

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

(a) Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/534 and Add.1)**

The President: The Assembly will first take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of document A/55/534.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Review of the rates of reimbursement to the Governments of troop-contributing States", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/229).

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 4 of document A/55/534/Add.1.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision, entitled "Reform of the procedure for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 153.

Agenda item 116 (continued)

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/532 and Add.1)

The President: The Assembly will first take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 8 of document A/55/532.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/230).

The President: The General Assembly will now take a decision on the three draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 16 of document A/55/532/Add.1 and on the three draft decisions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 17 of the same document.

The General Assembly will first turn to draft resolution I, entitled "Results-based budgeting". The text of draft resolution I is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.19.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/231).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Outsourcing practices", the text of which is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.20.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/232).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2002-2003". The text of draft resolution III is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.25.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution III without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 55/233).

The President: The General Assembly will now turn to draft decision I, entitled "Investigation into the misdirection of contributions made by Member States to the United Nations Environment Programme Trust Fund account".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: Draft decision II is entitled "Biennial programme of work of the Fifth Committee for 2001-2002". The text of draft decision II is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.33.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: Draft decision III is entitled "Action taken on certain items". The text of draft decision III is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.34.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision III without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision III was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 116.

Agenda item 118

Programme planning

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/710)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. The text of the draft resolution is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.18.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/234).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 118.

Agenda item 122 (continued)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/521/Add.1)

The President: I call on the representative of France, speaking on behalf of the European Union, for an explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Levitte (France) (spoke in French): I note from the Secretary-General's smile that he is particularly pleased that we are discussing this item on our agenda. We, too, are pleased. We have left the conference room used by the Fifth Committee, which through long nights gradually became a souk, then a dormitory and eventually a torture chamber. Exhausted, but relieved and happy, we have now arrived here.

If we have been able safely to reach this solemn Hall with a great success to our credit, it is thanks above all to Gert Rosenthal. I wish to pay a solemn tribute to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee. His two coordinators, Ambassador Abelian and our friend Frank Smith, have also earned our thanks, as has the Secretariat as a whole, which, through all these days and nights, has done a truly fantastic job.

The member countries of the European Union wish to offer their heartfelt gratitude and a fraternal salute to the Ambassador of Nigeria, who led the work of the Group of 77 and China with competence, authority and great talent, for which I highly commend him. We set out from positions that were often very far apart and we managed to find common ground on the two scales that we will shortly be adopting. I wish to include the Ambassador of Colombia in these words of thanks. He turned our studious weekends into times of intellectual pleasure in the conference room, which we feel has now become one of New York's most select clubs.

The Millennium Summit — the greatest Summit ever assembled — gave new impetus to our Organization. Today, we can perpetuate that impetus by placing the United Nations on a solid footing. The Brahimi report will be implemented, ensuring better management of peacekeeping operations. Today, we will be taking a decision on both scales, notably that for peacekeeping operations, which has undergone fundamental reform — the first, in fact, in 27 years.

We have succeeded because we did not know that success was impossible. This great success story is a collective one and the member States of the European Union wish to convey our gratitude to all delegations. On behalf of the European Union, I urge that we now fully implement the decisions taken, in particular section B of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.5/55/L.36 on the regular budget. For us, section B is an essential part of the draft resolution. It establishes the precise terms of an alternative to be fully implemented in accordance with the various terms it establishes.

More than ever before, the European Union is resolved to provide its decisive support to help us attain our common aspiration: the practical, daily implementation of the ideals of the United Nations Charter.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. The text of the draft resolution is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.36.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/5 B).

The President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their position on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): As one of the major contributors to the regular budget of the United Nations, Brazil participated in the negotiations on the scale of assessments in the spirit of flexibility, fully aware of their importance to the future of this Organization. We are facing extraordinary challenges and we all feel that the task has been accomplished.

As is widely and clearly known, Brazil faces at this time a very special situation that derives from distortions in the conversion of our economic data. This kind of situation has been foreseen in previous resolutions on the scale calling for the correction of excessive distortions in the income of States Members. These distortions result in an important artificial increase in the Brazilian assessment rate. We regret that there has not been the necessary political will to fully address this serious imbalance.

While we recognize the important efforts made towards its alleviation, the result still leads to Brazil's being assessed substantially above its real participation in the world's output. It is also unfair that a disproportionate increase in the Brazilian quota will serve to compensate a decrease or to alleviate an increase of the contributions of highly developed countries to the United Nations budget. Indeed, these negotiations have disregarded the established principle requiring that the financial burden be shared in ways that take into account the difference between developed and developing countries. Such imbalance will create serious and unforeseen budgetary constraints for Brazil. That is why we are not in a position to fully endorse such an outcome. However, we have always participated constructively in this Organization and upheld its values and rules, among them the principle that diplomatic negotiations with a sense of fairness and balance are the bedrock of a strong United Nations.

Bearing in mind the overriding objective that we share of creating the conditions for a much-needed reform of the United Nations, we did not object to the adoption of the resolution without a vote. We hope that this enormous effort to approve the new scales will open a new phase in our permanent endeavour to strengthen the Organization and make its organs more representative and accountable, thereby increasing the legitimacy, authority and effectiveness of their actions.

Finally, I would like to refer to the excellent work of the coordinators, and especially to the great diplomatic qualities of the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, Ambassador Gert Rosenthal. His wisdom and patience were decisive in achieving a successful outcome of our deliberations.

Mr. Maquieira (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): It has been a long, hard day. I do not recall the last time I spent more than 26 consecutive hours confined in this building. This was a negotiating process that was

exhausting and, to some extent, uncomfortable for all delegations. Although we reached a consensus — and consensus is always a reason for satisfaction, because it means agreement has emerged among countries that start with different points of view — it is not a consensus that I would like to celebrate as I might others. For my country, Chile, the result of the exercise will mean a considerable increase in its assessment — a result that could in itself have been sufficient reason not to join the consensus. Yet we believe, as do most, if not all, Member States, that we need to look beyond the peculiar reasons that sometimes motivate countries to challenge their commitments to an institution and — in this case — consider the financial stability and the future of the United Nations, so that it can function in a way that will facilitate agreement and enable the obligations of its Members to be fulfilled.

I join others in expressing the hope that we can now leave behind us this subject that has unsettled relations between States and begin a new era for our Organization, its Members and its main contributors. Perhaps this new era will not be limited to the resolution of financial problems, but will extend to interest in the noble tasks before the Organization, which also require the kind of leadership that has been shown in this case.

Ms. Wensley (Australia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the delegations of New Zealand and of my own country in explanation of position following the adoption of resolution 55/5 B, on the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations.

Our delegations welcome the adoption of this resolution by consensus. We recognize the difficult circumstances facing many delegations during these negotiations, including the pressures on developing countries, many of which are faced with steep increases between the scale periods. To help ease some of this pain, our delegations, like those of other countries, gave our full support to the phase-in arrangements which are referred to in paragraph 4 of the resolution. I think that colleagues will recognize that the delegations of Australia and New Zealand have always tried to be a voice of reason and practicality. We have also always tried hard, while defending our own national interests, to defend and protect the United Nations and its rules and reform processes. Colleagues will recall successive statements in both formal and informal meetings urging that in our push for agreement we not take bad

decisions, not retreat from reforms already agreed and not distort the scale methodology unduly and in ways which could create problems in the future.

We are pleased with the level of accommodation to competing interests that this scale has been able to achieve without unduly compromising the integrity of the scale methodology. To the extent possible, we have sought to spread the pain equitably, and we believe we have achieved this. We continue to believe, however, that a true reflection of capacity to pay is some way off. We should continue to strive to avoid methodological adjustments made in order to sidestep our basic responsibility as Member States to pay our fair share of United Nations costs.

By adopting this resolution, the General Assembly has decided to reduce the ceiling from 25 per cent to 22 per cent, thereby reducing the assessment of the major contributor by 3 per cent. The ceiling is a distortion of the principle of capacity to pay, and this reduction a further distortion of this important principle. Our opposition to the reduction of the ceiling was based on our commitment to this principle. The ceiling is a political rather than a technical element in the scale. However, we were willing to review the ceiling and we listened to the arguments on their merits. We joined consensus on the resolution, since granting a reduction was clearly the express wish of the membership as a whole, and it is not the practice of our two delegations to block consensus. We are pleased that, having taken this political decision, we have also taken the corresponding political decision to spread the costs of the reduction to the membership equitably.

It is the understanding of all delegations which participated in these scale negotiations that the reduction of the ceiling involved a bargain. In exchange for the reduction, the major contributor would pay its arrears. The membership of the Organization has acted. We call upon the major contributor to now fulfil its side of the bargain and to pay its arrears in full and without delay. We look forward to the speedy resolution of this issue so that the finances of the Organization can at last be placed on a sound footing. We also look forward to an improvement in the performance of all contributors, large and small, in paying their assessed contributions within the 30 days required by the United Nations financial regulations.

As a result of the decision we have just taken, our countries will face significant increases in our assessments. But, as has been the case in the past, our delegations remain committed to paying our assessments in full, on time and without conditions. We call on all others to do the same.

In conclusion, Australia and New Zealand wish to record formally our strong appreciation to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, Ambassador Rosenthal, and to the two coordinators, Ambassador Abelian of Armenia and Mr. Frank Smyth of Ireland, as well as to the Secretariat, for their dedication and patience in assisting Member States to bring these extremely difficult negotiations — which, I would like to recall, we started more than two years ago — to a satisfactory conclusion, and to achieve this historic agreement.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position. We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 122.

Agenda item 169

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/712)

The President: I call on the representative of the United Arab Emirates, who wishes to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolutions contained in document A/55/712.

Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): Given the problems and challenges of today's world, the United Arab Emirates is concerned about strengthening the role of the United Nations. We therefore support the relevant draft resolutions relating to the financing of peacekeeping operations. The increase in our country's assessments is very significant indeed. Not only is it inequitable, but it is not in keeping with numerous international norms and principles in the financial and administrative fields. This is especially relevant given that our national economy is based on a non-renewable resource, oil.

We are a developing country, and the demands of sustainable development continue to be very important as we try to strengthen the internal stability of our country. Despite these facts, given our awareness of the need to adopt resolutions by consensus on the

peacekeeping and regular budgets, we support the draft resolutions, even though they do not in reality reflect the concerns of numerous developing countries, in particular those that continue to experience major financial difficulties. However, this is a historic event in the history of this international Organization, especially given the difficult conditions being experienced by numerous peoples and countries throughout the world. In that context, we would like to reaffirm that the United Arab Emirates will remain aware of the need to increase its contributions to this international Organization and its specialized agencies, despite all the conditions and difficulties to which I have referred.

We have sent a letter to the Secretary-General with regard to the participation of our country in peacekeeping operations and to our contribution to the regular budget. Since 1998, we have continued to pay the same contribution, despite the enormous changes that have taken place in our country, including population growth, an increase in gross national product and a drop in individual per capita income, which today is about \$14,460 per annum. We therefore hope that, when it considers the matter, the Committee on Contributions will take our situation into account in accordance with its modalities and procedures.

In conclusion, we would like to wish you, Mr. President, and the Secretary-General, a happy new year, and we hope that peace, stability and happiness will embrace all humanity.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/235).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Voluntary movements in connection with the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/236).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 169.

Agenda item 176

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/711)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/237).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 176.

Agenda item 117

Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/713)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 37 of its report and on the two draft decisions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 38 of the same report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001". The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/238).

The President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001", without a vote.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/239).

The President: We turn now to draft decision I, entitled "Revised estimates of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2000".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision I without a vote.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II, entitled "The critical situation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women", without a vote.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 117.

Programme of work

The President: With regard to the programme of work of the General Assembly, apart from organizational matters and items that may have to be considered by operation of the rules of procedure of the Assembly and bearing in mind the action already taken by the Assembly thus far, I should like to propose that the following agenda items remain for consideration during the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly: agenda items 10, 11, 14, 17, 19, 20, 26, 40 to 43, 45, 46, 48, 50, 59 to 64, 73, 84, 86, 94, 97, 102, 105, 112, 114 to 153, 164, 166 to 169, 175, 176, 178, 179, 181 and 182.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly that those agenda items remain for consideration during the fifty-fifth session of the Assembly?

It was so decided.

Statement by the President

The President: It has been a very busy three and a half months for all of us, and I believe we should be quite satisfied with the results achieved. The Assembly has taken action on many important issues. I do not intend to go through all of them here. I will post a short summary on the work of the Committees and the plenary Assembly on my Web page for this purpose. For now, I would like to share some observations on the work done so far and thoughts on how we might want to go about our business next year.

The Millennium Summit was the seminal event of this session of the General Assembly and set the agenda for our work. The main challenge for the Millennium Assembly was how to implement the Summit Declaration.

In my view, the Declaration is one of the most important documents of recent times. If we are able to achieve its targets, it will have an enormous impact globally.

I am therefore very pleased that with the cooperation and support of all delegations we managed, in resolution 55/162, to establish a follow-up mechanism to the Millennium Summit as an integral part of the ongoing work of the United Nations.

It is also clear to me that in order to implement these goals the United Nations needs to open up. We need to enhance international cooperation, build bridges between societies and improve global governance. We need to reach out to other international and multilateral actors, such as the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and various regional organizations, as well as civil society as a whole. As I have stressed many times, the significance and relevance of the United Nations in the future will depend on our ability to involve our partners and civil society in our work.

In the past few weeks, two major items on the Assembly's agenda have dominated our discussions: what will the Assembly decide concerning the implementation of the Brahimi report, and will it agree to a new scale of assessments?

As far as the Brahimi report is concerned, the Secretary-General's initiative to convene a high-level panel, followed by the report presented by the panel, was welcome and timely. The report is a valuable

contribution to the efforts to strengthen one of the United Nations core functions: the maintenance of international peace and security.

As the President of the General Assembly, I encouraged the Assembly to consider this extensive report in a speedy manner, and together with Member States we managed to reach agreement in the very short time of one month. Given the complexity of this issue and the time pressure, I think we can be quite satisfied with the results. Much-needed additional resources will be made available to the Secretariat. However, work will have to continue in the new year, and I trust there is the political will to complete the effort.

During the past couple of weeks we had extremely difficult and complex negotiations on the scale of assessments. I myself made several appeals to delegations to come up with a substantive negotiated agreement — by consensus — on the two scales of assessment. That a compromise was finally reached shows that delegations put the interests of the Organization above everything else and understood the seriousness of the consequences to the Organization of a failure to reach consensus on this critical issue. I commend delegations for the outcome reached today.

Throughout this session an important concern of mine has been to find ways to improve the functioning of the General Assembly itself. I have tried to work in an open and transparent way with my colleagues and to foster a collaborative spirit. I have instituted some changes, such as amending the rules to establish the dates for the opening of the Assembly's session each year. I am looking at ways to streamline the Assembly's huge agenda, and I will be working on this and other proposals next year. In order to guide this process and to give it some focus I intend to convene an informal brainstorming session of the General Committee some time in February. I will also prepare a non-paper in connection with the above-mentioned brainstorming session. I believe that several small steps, when combined, can actually have a big impact.

Looking ahead to next year, we will have a full calendar of meetings and conferences. For my part, I will keep the momentum going through the special sessions of the General Assembly on human settlements and HIV/AIDS and the other activities of the General Assembly. Concerning the special session on HIV/AIDS, my office and I, with the help of two able facilitators, will have a central role in the preparatory process. I will also chair two working

groups that will start meeting next year: on Security Council reform and concerning Africa's special needs.

One observation that I have made during my tenure — having come to the United Nations from the outside — has to do with the resources of the Organization. The United Nations is clearly underfunded and in desperate need of more adequate resources. Years of zero nominal growth have taken their toll. It is a policy that has clearly come to the end of its usefulness.

All in all, we have all worked hard, and I am sure you are looking forward to a well-deserved break. Before we take that break, let me say a word of thanks. First of all I should like to thank all Ambassadors and other representatives for their cooperation. Special thanks go to the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly, as well as to the Chairpersons and Bureaux of the Main Committees and working groups — not least to Ambassador Gert Rosenthal, who chaired a historic session of the Fifth Committee — for their valuable cooperation and leadership in bringing our work to conclusion. They have shown that the Millennium Summit has indeed created a momentum and a new spirit of political will that will help us achieve the goals set in the Declaration. I trust that this kind of consensus-building and teamwork will help us resolve the challenges ahead.

I should also like to extend my thanks to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and to the Secretariat as a whole. In particular, I wish to thank the hard-working staff of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, under the able leadership of Under-Secretary-General Jin Yongjian. Special thanks go to the teams of Mr. Vadim Perfiliev and Mr. Ozdinch Mustafa, as well as to our interpreters, conference room officers and documentation officers. Without them, our meetings would not have been possible. My team and I are deeply grateful to all of them.

Finally, I wish to thank the media, which have followed our agenda this session. Through them, I hope, we have been able to convey a more open and more easily understandable picture of the work of the General Assembly to the general public.

I would like to wish you a very happy holiday, and I look forward to working with you in the new year.

The meeting rose at 1.50 p.m.